(c) if so, whether it, would make coal costlier for small companies; and

(d) if so, how would small companies compete market system with the big companies which have received coal block?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of reply given in part (a) above.

Land sliding due to mining

†2523. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to mining work carried out in the coal areas of Jharkhand, the threat of land sliding has arisen therein;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any scientific study to determine the area affected by this mining work and the details thereof;

(c) the total number of incidents of land sliding during the last four years and the number of people lost their lives in these accidents; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to prevent these accidents and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) Land sliding is defined as a mass of earth / rock that slides down a mountain or a cliff. In coal mines no such phenomena takes place. As such there is no threat of land sliding due to mining carried out in the areas of coal mines in Jharkhand.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of reply given to part (a) above.

Fire in coal mines

†2524. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that some mines of Bharat Coking Coal Limited and Central Coal Field Limited have caught fire for decades;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the total number of sites caught fire and since when the sites caught fire alongwith reasons therefor;

(c) whether his Ministry has claimed that these fires would soon be brought under control; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to extinguish these fires and prevent recurrence of fire in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) It is a fact that some mines of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) are having fires for decades. In BCCL, at the time of nationalization it was estimated that about 70 mine fires existed in 40 collieries. These mine fires have been inherited by BCCL. The reasons for mine fires are unscientific mining before nationalization, inherent nature of coal of being susceptible to combustion, spreading of fires from adjoining localities, bush fire (ban tulsi) etc. In CCL, four fires are existing in 3 collieries for over a decade. The fires occurred due to spontaneous heating.

(c) and (d) As a result of the efforts made, 10 fires of BCCL have been extinguished and the remaining fires are by and large kept under control. The following steps have been taken to control/extinguish and to prevent recurrence of fires in coal mines:

(i) Sand flushing into active fire zone from surface to underground through boreholes.

(ii) Surface blanketing to prevent breathing in of air to the fire area.

(iii) Inert gas flushing from surface through boreholes to extinguish fire.

(iv) Quenching of spot fire and mining out the quenched coal.

(v) Sealing of the part of the mine under fire by construction of fire stoppings/isolation stoppings.

(vi) Application of fire resistant sealant in and around the isolation stopping/fire stoppings.

(vii) Regular monitoring with the help of Co-detectors, toximeter, air sampling and analysis of the same at colliery level.

(viii) Trench cutting by mechanized means to excavate fire and to prevent spread of the same.

(ix) Intentional flooding by water to quench the fire in some mines.

Apart from above actions, 13 schemes for dealing with fires and control of subsidence in BCCL have been sanctioned and funded by the Government. Out of these, 7 schemes have been completed. A Master Plan has also been prepared to deal with fires and control of subsidence in Jharia coalfield as a long term measure.

In CCL, various measures have been taken to extinguish and control the fire such as sealing off to cut oxygen supply, submerging with water, filling up with non-combustible material etc.

Deficiencies in NLC

2525. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been major deficiencies on the part of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) in formulating the budgetary proposals and their budgets are lapsing year after year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there has been considerable mis-match between the financial targets and achievements in the Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) and the track record of the NLC in achieving financial targets has been far from satisfaction; and

(c) if so, the measures taken by Government to project only realistic and achievable budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The mis-match in financial targets and achievements was mainly due to the fact that the new projects such as Mine II Expansion, TPS II Expansion and Barsingsar Mine and Thermal Power Plant were in the process of sanction in the Government.

(c) The above projects have now received Government's sanction. Therefore, the projections would now be more realistic. Monthly monitoring of the progress of expenditure is also being done by NLC and the Government.